

SOME

General Considerations

OFFERED,

Relating to our present

TRADE.

And intended

For its Help and Improvement.

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By T. T. Merchant.

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General Considerations

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BY T. T. M.

LONDON

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S O M E

## General Considerations

# OFFERED, &c.

**T**Here is nothing that Mankind ; in our latter times especially, has more bent his Thoughts about, and been more Conversant in, than the business of Trade, being fully sensible that its improvement, tends not only to the support of Personal but National Interests ; and hence it is, that our Industrious Ancestors, while it was in its Infancy, exercised all possible care in nursing it up, and defending it from those mischiefs wherewith it might be beset. The Foundations of this Kingdom, are Land, Trade, and Manufactures, and are such supports, which by no means ought to be shaken ; they have for a considerable time born the brunt of the War, and it is time now they should have a breathing, and slide their Necks out of the Collar : The Trade of this Kingdom hath all-along been an advantageous

vantagious Ornament to it, and would be  
 still so, if the occasion of its pinings were look-  
 ed into, and fit ways apply'd for its recovery.  
 I would not pretend to Dictate, but with all  
 Submission Crave, that we should but have an  
 eye to the Vitals of Trade, which seems to be  
 deeply affected. For what thing soever is a da-  
 mage to our Manufacture, or Weight upon our  
 foreign Trade beyond what it can bear up under,  
 stabs it to the Heart: hereby the Subject is dis-  
 abled: but when our Manufactures are encouraged,  
 and our foreign Trade made easie, and firmly se-  
 cured, our Lands then will be advanced. And it  
 is indeed very evident that the promoting of our  
 Manufactures is not only beneficial to particular  
 persons, but also to the Kingdom of *England* in  
 general, wherein many thousands of poor indigent  
 Families are employed, and as the said Manufactures  
 are either advanced, or diminished, so the Value  
 of our Lands must increase or decrease in proportion;  
 for notwithstanding that the product of our Lands  
 hath born a very considerable price, for seven or  
 eight years last past, occasioned by the badness of  
 our Coin, the Clothing our Armys at Home and  
 abroad, and the devastations made in several of our  
 Neighbouring Countries by the late Wars, as well  
 as the taking of great Numbers of our outward-  
 bound Ships, which oblig'd the Merchants to buy  
 double the quantities thereof, than otherwise they  
 would have done: the Peace having put a Pe-  
 riod unto all those things, our product must come  
 down to its ancient Price, and in all probability  
 much



much lower; for, within these Eight or Ten Years we have had several Wounds and Breaches made in our Trade by our Neighbours, they having the same opportunity to advance their Trade and Navigation, that *England* had for several Years, at least before the War; I mean the *French*, *Portuguese*, *Genoise*, *Swedes*, and *Danes*, not to say any thing of the *Dutch*, who, by their Industry and good Husbandry, never fail to advance their Interest wherever they get footing; for what advantage in Traffick soever any Kingdom gains, is generally so much lost by another.

During the late War, those Nations above mentioned have not only been the Carriers of their own Manufactures, but also of their Neighbours in finging their own Shipping, by which they are not only become very Rich in general, but even in this, that they have furnished themselves with as many Ships and Men, as are sufficient to manage their own Trade, which within these dozen Years was the great part of it ours, and managed by us; for *England* having been many Years at Peace, whilst most of our Neighbours were oppressed by War, and by consequence rendred in a great degree incapable of Navigation. We possess'd most of the Trade of *Europe*, having then no Partners but the *Dutch*, and they too, but Fourths or Fifths, which by good Husbandry they have so much improv'd, that they are now more than joynt Partners.

If it be objected, That though those Nations have, during the last War, gained the ascendant over us in several parts of our Trade, yet now  
that

that we enjoy Peace, we may probably recover it again. To this I answer, That we have little reason to hope to out-Trade the *Dutch*, as matters now stand, more than the rest of our Neighbours; who Build, Victual, and Sail cheaper than the *Dutch*, having most or all of their Materials or Merchandizes within themselves, and the Labour of Workmen and others much cheaper than the *Dutch*, who have little or nothing of their own, but obtain all by Navigation, paying but very small duties for Exportes and Importes, which is the great incouragement of Merchants; as the contrary is the Bane of Trade, to the woollfull Experience of many Nations, our own not excepted. And tho' this may seem a digression from the Matter in hand, yet may it serve as an Auxiliary, to excite our diligence, not only to propagating Navigation, but also the Seaple Commodities of this Nation, viz, the Woollen Manufactory, &c. which, if neglected, will in a few Years pine; for we having Competitors in our Foreign Trade, and so may have the like in our Manufactures, there being in *America* diverse considerable Settlements, which hitherto have been furnished with most of their Cloathing and Utensils from *England*, but their Countreies not furnishing them with sufficient quantities of Vendible Commodities for *England*, by this means their Cloathing proving excessive dear and chargeable, hath put them upon breeding all sorts of Cattle, and making their own Cloathing, which is certainly very detrimental to us.

The like may be said of *Ireland*, whose Cattel and Provisions being low and likely to be lower, occasions their taking such Methods as may advance the Woollen Manufactures there, they being provided of all suitable Materials for such an Undertaking, which being Transported, they will as much outvy us in Woollen Commodities as they do in their Provisions; and if it should be in any degree or particular hindred, or prohibited, it would not only lessen the value of the *English* Settlements, but mightily weaken the Protestant Interest, or at least make things uneasy, and hinder Foreigners from going and settling there: for all Persons that transport themselves into Foreign Regions, do it in expectation of an advantageous and secure Settlement, which is the principal Motive to run Adventures, and to visit unknown Countries; so that it may be better to lay a Duty of upon every pound weight of Woollen Manufactory exported from *Ireland*: It will make theirs equivalent with our Woollen Manufactures, so both Nations may go on joyntly in the preservation thereof, and prevent the Exportation of Wooll from either Kingdom into Foreign Parts: For all Trade and Industry ought to be free, so as not to be fettered with heavy Impositions; for where they are so, all Commerce will fail, the Common People and Tradesmen growing poor, and thereby the intrinsic value both of Lands and all its productions are lessened, insomuch that many of the best Subjects, (*viz.*) the labouring people, will be in a manner forced

to seek their Fortunes in other Countries, as meeting with nothing but discouragement at home: therefore it will be highly necessary not only to promote the Exportation of the Woollen Manufacture, but also the Consumption at home: a Specimen of the Benefit thereof is very evident in the late Act made in King *Charles II's* Reign, for burying in Woollen, which Act cannot do less then occasion the yearly Consumption of three Million of yards of Woollen for Funerals in this Kingdom.

But there are several projects of late that have obtained Reputation, to the prejudice of the fore-mentioned Manufacture, one whereof is the furnishing of Funerals, by a small number of Men called Undertakers, who always keep by them all necessaries and proper materials to Fit and Accommodate Funerals, viz. Cloaks, Hangings, Coach-coverings, &c. So that such Persons who formerly were at great expences in mourning for their Relations and Friends, may now, for a small matter, have all things fitted for that purpose: and though, it's true, when Gentlemen bought those things themselves, they made a less show, yet it did bring more advantage to the Nation, such things being generally spent within the compass of one Year: but by this invention one Cloak and other necessaries do serve several Years, and furnish some hundred Funerals, working Journey-work as long as one thread will hang to another. And this is not only an Enemy to the Consumption of the Woollen Manufacture, but very injurious to  
many

many Tradesmen, as Weavers, Drapers, Taylors, Glovers, &c. For these Gentlemen the Undertakers are good Husbands, pinchingly buying all things in gross and at first hand, and Tradesmen employed under them have very low rates, no better then Taylors have of Salesmen; for it must needs be detrimental to our Nation to diminish its number of Labourers and lower the Prices.

Moreover, since the Method of these Undertakers have got footing, Persons of ordinary Rank, may for the value of Fifty pounds make as great a Figure, as the Nobility and Gentry did formerly with the expence of more than Five Hundred Pounds. The Undertakers are great gainers, because one Suit of Mourning Furniture will serve above an hundred times; so that hence there not only happens a less Consumption, but the Gayety and Splendor both of the Nobility and Gentry is hereby very much eclipsed, so that not many of them do in this exceed the show of the Common people, except some few of the Nobility, who lie a considerable time in State, so that it is very clear that twenty or thirty of those sort of Men do greatly hinder the Consumption of our Woollen Manufacture, and consequently destroy the livelihoods of many thousand Families.

For Nations are generally poor where the Labourers's Wages are small, and the Consumption but little, it having been for many Years past, the great Wages and free Circulation of Trade amongst the common people as well as others, that hath made *England* exceed all her Neighbouring Nations in



Riches and in the Consumption not only of our own Growth and Manufactures, but likewise of many Foreign Commodities, such as *Wines, Spanish Fruits, Sugars, Silks, Spices, Tobacco, &c.* of which perhaps this small Island hath consumed more than *Poland, Swedeland, Denmark, and France,* and thereby have brought very great Revenues to the Crown: if this were not so, why should not *Scotland and Ireland* be as beneficial to the Government as *England*, for nothing more advanceth Lands and all its productions, then Traders large gains, which promoteth free Eating, Drinking, and Genteel living, whatever contrary mistaken notions may have got footing.

It is also further to be consider'd, That there are two or three other Inventions prejudicial to the publick, *viz.* making Buttons and Buckles of various sorts of Metall, with which things, a few hands can supply many Nations, three or four Boys and Girls being able to make two thousand four hundred dozen in a Week of Pewter Buttons, every dozen whereof will last a very long time, far longer then either Thread, Silk, or Hair, and which are valued at first hand but from twelve to eighteen pence *per* Gross, great and small together, which indeed may be of some advantage for Exportation, but hinders the Consumption of our own Manufactures at home. The like may be understood of Shoe-Buckles, of which a small number of People can supply a whole Nation, for you may buy a pair of Shoe Buckles, from a penny to two-pence (unless Silver) that will last from

from one year to seven, and some others of greater value that may wear twenty Years, not only to the detriment of our Manufactures in general, but more particularly to the Narrow Weavers; for it is supposed, that less than one hundred of Buckle-Makers will supply more people, than fifty or sixty thousand narrow Weavers, in Tape, Cotten, Ferret, and Silk Ribband, which Trade of late have been forc'd to seek their Fortunes in other Countries, to the damage and dishonour of the *English* Nation.

The like may be consider'd of the invention of Paper Hangings, which are but of small value, endure long, and employ but a few people: Nevertheless they will last almost as long as our common Woollen Hangings, provided the Walls are lined with Slit-Deal, or Mat, Chair high; which does likewise lessen the number of our People, and the Consumption of our Woollen Manufactures.

Moreover, though Navigation be one of the greatest Pillars of Trade, and brings the greatest advantage to the Nation, nevertheless the Consumption of our own Manufactures and Employment of many hands are considerable additional advantages; for, suppose ten Shoe-makers could make as many Shoes in a Week as a hundred do now, and those too wear five times as long, what then must become of the rest of the Workmen? must they not seek their Fortunes in other Countries? the like may be said of all other Trades: does not the strength of this Nation consist in Traders,

ders, Artificers, and Tradesmen, they being most Tractable and Ingenious, both in Peace and War. It is the working People and Tradesmen that pays the King his Tax for Ale and Beer, and not so much the Countrymen nor Shepherd; no, it is the former that more abundantly consumes the Sugar, Spices, Spanish Fruits, Tobacco, and Wines too, and do thereby advance the Consumption of our own Provisions and Fruits, many of which would be of little value, if it were not for the forementioned Commodities, mixed with Apples, Pears, Plumbs, Gooseberrys, Currants, and none of which would be made Food, and so be advantageous to us, if they were not mixed with such Sweets, which do likewise occasion the Consumption of Flower: and it is most clear that the Consumption of their Commodities, have of late Years mightily encouraged Importation and Exportation: so that if our expences at home be lessened for want of a free Circulation of Trade amongst the people, our Plantation Trade will suffer as well as others; for the *French, Dutch, Portuguese, &c.* who have all of them Plantations in the *West-Indies*, and as theirs do rise, ours consequently declines, and will continue declining unless they have some special Encouragement and Assistance, and that because the *French King* does as much bend his inclinations and strength to the advancement of Trade and Navigation, especially his Plantations, greatly encouraging them by laying on small Duties on their several productions, as Sugar, &c. and lending his Care also to all such Projections  
and

and Proposals that his Subjects do offer for the advancement of Trade, and the Manufactures of his Kingdom; and if they have a fair prospect of advantage, he is then willing to bear some of the Losses and Charges that may happen to the same Project, for the first two or three Years; he does likewise mightily endeavour to advance the profitable Trade of the Fishery and sundry Manufactures, which are advanced since the Peace about twenty *per Cent.* which is a great Encouragement to them.

The *Portuguese* likewise, of late being advanced in Trade and Navigation, and having one of the best and largest Settlements for Sugar, *viz. Brasil, &c.* will be thereby encouraged to make greater Quantities of that Commodity than formerly, which together with the forementioned *French* Settlements will supply most of the Markets of *Europe*, which hitherto the *English* have done.

Whereas, on the other hand, our own Sugar Plantations must decline, especially that of *Barbadoes*, the Land being weakened and almost worn out by often Planting, which perhaps in its youthfull days was the most Fertilst Spot of all *America*, and twenty or thirty years ago was so strong and fertile, that from once Planting their Sugar, Canes would from the same root bear considerable crops seven years together before they needed to be Planted again, and had no occasion to be dunged all that time: but they now are forced

ced to new Plant and Dung them every Year, and have treble the Labour and Hands to keep them from Weeds; so that formerly one hundred *Negroes* and one Sugar Wind-mill would clear the Planter more Money then three hundred *Negroes* and two or three Wind-mills will do now: so that every hundred weight of Sugar stands the maker thereof in more than double what it did then, and yet does not yield him half the Price.

The *West-India* Settlements, for these Thirty or Fourty Years last past, have been the brightest Gem in our Crown of Trade, by employing great numbers of Ships, and making the best of Seamen; for within these twenty Years the Island of *Barbadoes* alone did load yearly near four hundred sail of Ships, so that no Trade hath advanced Navigation like those Settlements: but now the charge of making Sugar is so great, and the price so low, that this, together with the high Duties lately laid on their Commodities, will force them to make but a third or half the Quantity of Sugar, and oblige them to apply themselves to raise Provisions to support their Families with their own Product, which have hitherto been furnished from *England*, *Ireland*, and the Settlements upon the Main; for within these twenty Years we did lade from *England* more than one hundred and fifty Sail of Ships, with Bread, Butter, Cheese, Beer, Flesh, and other Eatables, besides all sorts of Merchandizes, and now we do not load three: therefore it will needs be for the interest of *England*



used to lighten their Burden, viz. the great Custom under which it is impossible for the Plantations to stand; for that which formerly raised and advanced the Planters, was the making of much Sugar, but that does now ruin and undo them, the Charge being much more than the Interest; to which if there be not proper remedies apply'd, it will cut off one of the Noblest Branches of Navigation.

Consider in the next place, as to our Trade with *France*; many are of various Opinions concerning it, the differing Notions whereof I will not here undertake to reconcile; but upon the whole we have good reason to affirm that it has always proved very profitable to this Nation, as all other Trades, wherein great numbers of our own Ships are employ'd as Carriers, which was the original advancement of Navigation.

Some will perhaps object and say, that the *French Trade* is of no great Importance to *England*, because of their exhausting from us great sums of Money.

To this I answer, that our Navigation may be lessened, and they may grow necessary, which is the Mother of Invention, be further setting up of Manufactures to the lessening of ours; besides, they have taken considerably of our Product, which we shall be deprived of by not trading

trading with them: So it is observed that great Numbers of Americans have lost their Possessions, and transported themselves to seek their Fortunes in unknown Countries; and many of them leaving their miserable Wives and Children to the Parish, and most of them have done so for want of such encouragement as they had formerly, and this has been partly occasioned, not so much from great numbers of Strangers that of late years have pressed in upon us, whose Education and miserable low way of living in comparison of ours, which have rendered them capable to Live and Work at lower rates than the *English*, most of them being Lodgers, Inn-mates, and sheltered under a few Housekeepers, and a House that contains four, six or eight Rooms does for the most part entertain near as many Families, as is usual in their own Countries, which does likewise hide and defend them from paying Taxes either to the Parish or Government: I say not so much on this account, as from great declension of their several employments.

In the next place, our Trade is likewise prejudiced, by another sort of Strangers of more value, most of which are single Men, as Factors, Gentlemen, and others, that are also Lodgers and Inn-mates, many of them live here from Seven to Twenty Years, employing some of our Eminent Tradesmen, as Packers, &c. who are paid but little better than Journey-men to Buy and

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and collected into the *Wool-staple* in *Great* and at first hand; whereby they obstruct and hinder the lively-hoods of many of our Tradesmen, whose hands they would otherwise have passed through before they came to the Exporter, as in former-times was usual: And when these Factors have by their frugal living and Monopolizing methods obtained great Estates, they then remit them in to their own Countries, and bid farewell to *England*, wherein they have so much advanced themselves, and have lived so free and easie from all Duties and Impositions, being not on'y excused from any Office or Charge of the Parish, but also to the King and Government, when at the same time our own poor Tradesmen that are House-keepers, and who have but a mean way of getting a Livelyhood, are overwhelmed and oppressed with Taxes and Officers, when these Strangers get the Money and bear none of the Burthens, there being many thousands of those people, for which there is no Preident in any other Nation: for these incroachments are like Sheep fed upon the *Consheld-hills*, and black Cattle on the *Welsh Mountains*, which when they come into the Valleys or better Pastures, will improve and grow Fat, whereas such as are bred upon the same spot or Pasturage, can hardly live: There are some of those Moths that spoil us in our Trade. Another Consideration, is that we have lost very much of our Navigation, which appears from the unheard of losses Merchants have met with during the late

Ward, there, having been many brave, valiant  
 men, and others rendered weak and feeble. And  
 The inland Traders have this advantage of their  
 former, (*viz.*) to spend what they have formerly  
 got, for want of a free and generous Circu-  
 lation of Trade, which occasions many eminent  
 Tradesmen of all sorts, and such as were good  
 House-keepers to shift and hide themselves in  
 Lodgings, and to follow the fashion of our  
 neighbouring Nations, which does and will prove  
 very prejudicial, not only to the Employments  
 of many People, but to all such as have their  
 Estates in Houses, there being many hundreds  
 in and about *London*, that do not pay the King's  
 Tax; and other Casualties that happen, which  
 do not only mightily lessen the Consumption of  
 our own Growth, but more especially that of  
 all Foreign Commodities, and such as come  
 from our own Plantations also, as Sugar, To-  
 bacco, &c. Likewise Wine, Spice, *Spanish* fruit,  
 and a hundred other things, for of late and at  
 this time these Commodities are very low in  
 Price, notwithstanding the Merchants have now  
 above a third or fourth of the quantities at Mar-  
 ket as there used to be in peaceable times, but  
 especially of some sorts of them, the principal  
 occasion of this lowness and dead trading is, we  
 do not consume half the quantities we did for-  
 merly, neither do we Export so much, for our  
 neighbouring Nations do and will furnish them-  
 selves from their own Settlements or Plantations

and

and other parts which is another considerable wound to Navigation.

Now tho' some of the forementioned Imported Commodities are consumed by some, makes some of the unthinking sort to suppose, that there is as much spent as ever, yet the Dealers in those Commodities will inform us otherwise, and to their great loss; for the grand Consumption of those things, do chiefly depend on the middle or common people, viz. the Tradesmen, who are numerous, and as the Proverb has it, *Many hands make light work*, for every Tradesman is under a kind of necessity to spend in proportion to his Trade and Gain: as for Example, in several our parts of London, there were within the compass of two or three small Streets, Lanes, and Alleys, two or three thousand working Tradesmen, and such as belonged to them, some of which Trades did get about twelve hundred pound per Week, when they had full Employment, and most of this money was spent every Week in the Neighbourhood in strong Drink, several sorts of Flesh, Bread, Butter, Cheese, Sugar, Spice, Spanish Fruit, and in Cloathing, which caused a quick Circulation in all Business.

But now the Numbers of Labourers is not only lessened, but those that are, do work for less Wages, and have not work enough neither, which does likewise occasion the Rent of all Houses,



House, &c. to 100, and in a little time these things will have an influence upon Land; for Tradesmen did not use to matter whether they gave from Twenty to Fifty or Sixty pound for a House, provided that their Trade was good, but are not able to give such Rents now.

The like is to be understood in all Expences and Taxes to the King, therefore the promotion of Navigation and a free Trade, gives life to the Trading People; more especially if the Obstacles and Impediments be made easie, for great Weights and Burthens laid on any particular Member, will not only discourage it, but must enable it to sink and perish; besides, Merchants are, as is said before, the Engines of the whole Nation, and if encouraged, have an innate power to set all hands at work, and to advance all the Manufactures and Productions of the Nation, and render the whole capable not only to live well, and spend Money liberally, but to pay Taxes as freely.

Now great Taxes cannot, as is mention'd before, be born by any particular part of the people without endangering their ruin, more especially the Importers and Exporters, because they are the High-ways and principal Gates that all Commerce must pass through, which, if in any degree be stop'd or obstructed, the whole must suffer in proportion; besides, such Taxes and Impositions as are laid unequally on the people, have

have hardly ever refused, hitherto, neither is it reasonable to think, that they will for the future, be so disposed in consequence of

And indeed, it seems to be a general opinion, that a small gentle Tax laid on the Mouth and Back, would answer and supply the Nations present occasions, and raise such sums as their necessities call for, without any manifest Burthen or Injury to them; for the Belly will not be cheated, besides, then there would be many Millions of people more to pay, than which now lies on less than one Million, by this, you bring in considerable numbers of Strangers, Young People, and Lodgers, such as we before treated of, who have hitherto stifled their necks out of the Collar, many of them being Eminent and better able to pay Taxes, than some Housekeepers, both of our own Nation and others: This way would hurt neither rich nor poor, provided that Navigation and a free Circulation of Trade be maintained, and Merchants encouraged; for the sums of Money that are now wanted, and that must be raised to make good the deficiency of former Funds, and for the present supply of the King, will be much more difficult to be advanced than ever; for as Trading fails, so in proportion all things fall into a Consumptive State, and therefore Taxes will rarely answer, because the Commodities they are laid on, are not spent and consumed as formerly, great part of the people being forced by

pure

pure necessity to retrench their expenses in all  
 Luxurious Commodities, of which so much then  
 is consumed in England, are of value to the  
 King, for those that are Exported, pays next  
 to nothing, most of the Customs being drawn  
 back. But no doubt it being known that the  
 King's revenue is much lessened by the  
 So that it is clear and manifest beyond Con-  
 tradiction, the want of Trading makes the gene-  
 rally of the people grow poor, of which our  
 Experience hath made us too sensible already,  
 so that not only the Consumption of the fore-  
 mentioned Commodities, but likewise of our  
 Manufactures too, will be lessened.

It may be some will object, That the English  
 Nation have never been used to have their Food  
 and Cloathing Taxed, so that it will be a hard  
 Morfel to swallow. I answer hereunto that be-  
 fore now, we never had occasion for such great  
 Sums of Money, and therefore, as the Sums are  
 great and strange, the Methods of raising them,  
 must be as universal, and it will be well if the  
 Nation can do it either by this or any other  
 equal way or Method.

Now it is further to be noted that the prin-  
 cipal cause and reason, why we have suffered  
 such great Shipwracks of late in our Trade hath  
 been from the War, so that our neutral Neigh-  
 bours have had opportunity to increase their  
 number of Ships and Seamen, which by their con-  
 siderable

considerable gain, have wounded us to the very heart, in the next place our Merchants and Traders, are of as various Opinions and Notions in Trade, both those that Trade abroad and such as Trade at home, and for the most part so many Trades as there are, so many Notions and Opinions they are of, in those Trades they have been bred up, so that if Traders do not know nor essentially understand and have not true universal Principles and Notions, but disagree among themselves.

But it is not to be doubted, that if the Exporters and all inland Traders, and dependers or Craftsmen, did agree in true universal Notions and Methods of Trade, then our Country Gentlemen must be convinced and made sensible, that it would be their principal interests to propagate and advance Trade, which hitherto hath made this Nation richer than any of our Neighbouring Countrys, and hath more than trebled in value every Acre of Land in *England*, within the compass of one hundred years, for about that time Trading and Merchandize did take its birth, we having very little before, for in King *Henry VIII.*'s Reign the Customs were not much more then Ten thousand pound *Per Annum*, by which any person may easily Judge of Trade then and now, and all Land Manufactures, bore then a proportionable low value; but it is to be noted, that our great and as it were unheard-of Trade, hath advanced within the compass of Fifty years,

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when it came on with a rapid motion, which was chiefly occasioned by the Wars and continual devastations, our Neighbouring Nations made one upon another, and if any of them had Peace Seven or Ten years, then new Wars were waged again, so that by their Misery and Poverty, *England* had the opportunity to invest themselves in the whole Trade of *Europe*, and about the same time the *West-Indies* was settled to the very great profit and advancement of Navigation, which hath now seen its best days and if the present Impositions lately laid on their Commodities, be not eased, many brave Plantations must of necessity sink and come to nothing, or at least yield no profit nor advantage to *England*, and will as it were cut of one of the principallest Branches of Navigation, as has been already said: for it is the great quantities of Bulkish Commodities, that multiplies Ships and Men, and that pays the King most Customs, viz. Sugar, Tobacco, Cotton, Ginger, Wine, and the like, which Commodities can never be in any Quantity Imported nor consumed, but only in such Nations, as have a free brisk Trade and easie Duties to the Importer, and where the Commonalty and working people have great Wages, which renders them able to Drink and Eat them; for that is the Mouth or Carrier that vends the most part of such things.



For this cause the Tradesmen and other common people of *England* have spent and consumed greater quantities of such things than half *Europe*; the Tradesmen and poor of other Nations hardly knowing their names, and much less their natures.

Now many do alledge, that it is the Exportation of several Commodities that we bring for Returns from Foreign parts, that affords the most benefit to this Nation, which I agree to, yet nevertheless there are many eminent Commodities, which are Imported and pays the King considerable Duties which must be spent in *England*, viz. Spanish Fruit, as Raisins of several sorts, Figs, Pruens, Currants, Dates, Almonds, Rice, Spice, Silks, Wines of all sorts, &c. the Consumption whereof, since the dead Trading and high Taxes, have been contracted into a narrow Circle, and must be yet more if Merchants, Traders, and Tradesmen, do not meet with more incouragement than they have lately, or than they have a present prospect of; so that it is most clear that the Consumption of such things at home is as profitable to the Nation, as those that are Exported again: for if we can neither consume them at home nor Export them abroad, how should our Neighbours be able to pay for our Manufactures, for which we have those Commodities in Exchange; Some perhaps will object, and say we may have money, which can

cannot be : but suppose such a thing could be effected, what then would become of our Navigation, for a few Ships would carry our own Manufactures and bring in Money, and what support would this be to the Government, for then all the Customs would not pay the King's Officers their Salleries, more especially since our Markets are not so encouraging as formerly ; and hence it is that the Revenues of the Crown do decrease, occasioned by the generall retrenching of expences.

I shall further add, That the additional duties and high imposts laid on Merchandizes, do either discourage the Trader, or occasion less quantities to be Imported, making such things dear to the Subject, and thereby the Consumption is abated, because the people cannot reach to buy them, which as has been said already, will ruin our Plantations in the *West-Indies*.

The like is to be understood of great excises on several Commodities at home, which does so advance them, that thereby the common people consumes but a third or half the quantities they did when they were cheap : besides high duties on some Commodities, do as it were put a full stop to them, so that they pay the King little or no duty nor Custom, for if the imposts be greater than the interest, it does as it were at once cut off all publick commerce and  
puts

puts people on contriving indirect Methods and Ways how they may run such things, by which means the King is deprived of his Customs and the universal use of the thing is lost, and what is spent is made dear, so that people cannot obtain it, and there is no Man of sense but must acknowledge, that it is the Circulation of Trade amongst the inferiour Artificers and Tradesmen, on whom the chief and principal Consumption of our own Manufactures, and more particularly of Imported Commodities, such as Sugar, Spices, Spanish Fruit, all sorts of Wines, and the like, depends, and it is clear that if our Trade both at home and abroad, had been in such a Consumptive state Twenty or Thirty years ago as it is now, then this City would never have been built, nor so many Noble Houses and Structures Erected, as there has been in and about *London*, which are as so many Monuments of our former Riches and great Trade.

It hath been also observed, that in *England*, after Wars and Devastations, we used to have a considerable increase of Trade, and this being within the memory of most Traders, the people on the late Peace did expect to see the same, but they now find altogether the contrary, and instead of an increase, most Trades have been much worse than before, and as to our Merchants, what was taken before and destroyed by our Enemies in the War, hath been as it were cast away on Shore, by the small vend and low

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prices. So Melancholly as present are the Circumstances of Traders and Merchants of all degrees.

Therefore it would be highly necessary that there should be a Committee composed of two or three of the most prudent of each Trade who have, during the late War, been Traders, and continue to be at this time, and whose Estates and Stocks are now employ'd that way, for such are most sensible of the late Wounds our Trade has receiv'd, and can best advise Methods how they may be healed again; so that it were better such a Committee do not consist of those whose Education and manner of Life hath tended another way; nor yet of old Merchants, who for a considerable time have withdrawn their Stocks from Trade: for, tho' these may be Men of sufficient Parts and Integrity, yet now, all the Circumstances of Trading seem to be new; and therefore the Management and Methods that were formerly proper, before we had so many Rivals, cannot be suppos'd to be serviceable at present.

FINIS